



UN
2023 WATER
CONFERENCE

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UN 2023 Water Conference Side Event

"Namami Gange- An integrated and holistic approach towards conservation and rejuvenation of River Ganga and its ecosystem"

23rd March 2023, 5:00 to 6:15 PM (EST), Trusteeship Hall, UN Headquarters, New York, United States of America]

Organized by: National Mission for Clean Ganga, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India

Background on the event (one paragraph)

National Mission for Clean Ganga, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India organized the side event during UN Water Conference 2023 at United Nations Headquarter, New York on 23rd March 2023. During session, Namami Gange Mission's efforts towards restoring the riverine ecosystem were discussed under the theme of ID 2: Water for Sustainable Development: Valuing Water, Water-Energy-Food Nexus and Sustainable Economic and Urban Development (SDG 6.3, 6.4, 6.5 and SDGs 2, 8, 9, 11, 12). The session comprised high-level participation from different countries comprising Netherland, Denmark, and Germany and other key stakeholders such as World Bank and ICPDR showcased the importance of river rejuvenation programmes with focus on holistic and sustainable of ecosystem comprising water, land, food, energy, economic and urban development. The panel discussion had following key participants:

1) Chair: Minister of Jal Shakti- H.E. Gajendra Singh Shekhawat

2) Key Panelists:

1) Minister for Environment, Denmark, H.E.Magnus Heunicke

2) Director General, National Mission for Clean Ganga, Mr. G. Asok Kumar

- 3) Special Water Envoy, Netherland, Mr. Henk Ovink
- 4) Global Director, Global Water Practice, World Bank, Mr. Saroj Jha
- 5) Deputy Director, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Dr. Tania Vorwerk
- 6) Executive Secretary, ICPDR, Ms. Birgit Vogel

3) Moderator: Executive Director (Technical), Mr. D.P. Mathuria

Water Action Agenda (one paragraph, if possible, please include the link to your commitment in the [Water Action Agenda database](#))

To support the Water Action Agenda, National Mission for Clean Ganga, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India has submitted two commitments namely, River Cities Alliance: Partnership for Building International River Sensitive Cities and Scaling up Technology driven Nature Based Solutions for River Rejuvenation. These commitments and partnerships will result in concrete and sustainable solutions in water sector, which will help creating roadmap and best learning practices for countries across the globe. Both the commitments include partnership with the countries and organisations which are currently supporting the implementation of Namami Gange Mission in India. The learnings developed with support of existing and future partnerships will create a knowledge exchange platform for other cities or countries. The link of both the published commitments are given below:

<https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/river-cities-alliance-partnership-developing-international-river-sensitive-cities>

<https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/scaling-technology-driven-nature-based-solutions-river-rejuvenation>

Key Issues discussed (5- 8 bullet points)

1. Most of the river systems, particularly in developing countries, are polluted and have disappeared due to lack of ecosystem planning.
2. Importance of river rejuvenation programmes like Namami Gange Mission with focus on holistic and sustainable riverine ecosystem comprising water, land, food, energy, economic and urban development.
3. Understanding the need for investment in water sector, India has committed investments of more than 240 billion dollars in the water sector and is also

implementing the largest dam rehabilitation programme in the world as well as efforts to restore the groundwater situation in the country.

4. Understanding the role and importance of people participation in river rejuvenation programmes as millions of people are connecting and interacting with the riverine ecosystem and there has been a massive surge in awareness on river related issues.
5. Need to bridge the people river connect by economic interventions such as introduction of the concept of Arth Ganga which gave a new dimension towards connecting local communities to Ganga and its tributaries through activities that can sustain them economically.
6. Understanding the role of international cooperation in river rejuvenation program with the aim of creating a world that is better and more sustainable.
7. Need for building the capacity of the developers, improve working conditions of labours on sites and develop national capacity towards the project finances

Key recommendations for action (5 - 6 bullet points)

1. Good cooperation between government, businesses and especially, between countries is essential. To come up with new solutions and make communities more resilient against effects of climate change, it is needed to come together and share technologies
2. Most important factor in achieving success is whole-of-the-government approach which requires cooperation among various departments through convergence of funds, resources - financial, technical, experience, wisdom, manpower, and much more.
3. Role of public participation is essential to start a mass movement by inclusion of various stakeholders such as the involvement of individuals, community stakeholders, NGOs, international NGOs, Panchayati Raj institutions, local body institutions, startups and faith-based organisations.
4. Adoption of new and innovative approaches such as Hybrid Annuity Model and One City One Operator which has improved transparency, ensured closer monitoring and quick completion of projects.
5. As part of institutional and sectoral reform, initiatives can be taken with clear focus on different components of water i.e., water supply, sanitation, irrigation, and water resource management, which will require comprehensive thinking

into river basin management as it will help in storing water, preventing floods, coping with droughts, and creating economics around the river.

6. A world-wide approach comprising multilateral knowledge exchange platforms are required to solve the global water crisis and to create a better ecosystem for generations to come.
7. It is important to adopt whole of global approach as well, building partnerships and inventing economy as bridge for sustainability of efforts.